Worst Ways to Solve

A less common way to brainstorm.

1. Identify an intractable problem.
2. Brainstorm a list of the worst ways to address the problem.
3. What makes these terrible ideas? Create a list of the principles behind what makes these bad ideas.
4. Prioritize 2-3 principles you want to incorporate into your real solution.
5. Are there any small ways to make these terrible ideas better?

Debrief:

- Do any of these ideas help you frame our problem?
- How do you feel about the ideas we ended up with?
- How did coming up with the worst ideas effect your thinking?

Takeaways:

- Sometimes focusing on the worst ways opens up new ways of thinking
- If you are having trouble solving a problem head on, think of other angles to see the problem from
- Helps us build trust and get on the same page about the problem
- Surface hidden assumptions or worries that people on the team might have.

Additional Brainstorm Techniques:

- How is X like Y?
- All the ways: Alternative uses for a common item
  - For example, all of the alternative uses for push pins